

Message Text

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PAGE 01 EC BRU 03297 141816Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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TO USIA WASHDC

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ERDA GERMANTOWN

ALL EC CAPITALS 544

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE EC BRUSSELS 3297

USIAC

E.O. 11652: NA

SUBJECT: PRESS PLAY OF EUROPEAN COMMISSION COMPLAIN ABOUT
NEW LICENSING PROCEDURES FOR NUCLEAR MATERIALS

REF: EC BRUSSELS 3268 PARIS 9256

1. APRIL 11 PRESS BRIEFING BY EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
COMMISSION DEPUTY SPOKESMAN WAS GENERALLY OBJECTIVE
STATEMENT OF SIMONET'S CONCERN ABOUT MARCH 31 NRC
DECISION TO REVIEW LICENSING PROCEDURES. SPOKESMAN
SAID "SITUATION SHOULD NOT BE OVERDRAMATIZED", BUT
EUROPEAN DEPENDENCE ON US SUPPLY SO GREAT THAT
SIMONET FELT OBLIGED TO TAKE UP MATTER WITH US
REPRESENTATIVES.

2. IN CONVERSATIONS APRIL 11-14 WITH BRITISH, FRENCH
AND GERMAN JOURNALISTS I EXPLAINED BACKGROUND OF NRC
DECISION: GROWING AWARENESS OF PUBLIC AND LEGISLATORS
(IN US AND ALSO IN EUROPE) OF NEED FOR SAFEGUARDS AND
JUSTIFIABLE DETERMINATION OF NRC TO BE SAFER THAN SORRY.

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PAGE 02 EC BRU 03297 141816Z

I EMPHASIZED NO EMBARGO, MERLEYL SUSPENSION OF LICENSING

WHILE PROCEDURES UNDER REVIEW.

3. EXTENSIVE PLAY IN EUROPEAN PRESS, EXCEPT FOR LE MONDE STORY BY BRUSSELS CORRESPONDENT LEMAITRE, EMPHASIZED SIMONET REASONS BUT GAVE ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF NRC ACTION. LEMAITRE WROTE HIS "EMBARGO", "RUPTURE OF CONTRACT", "MAYBE USSR MORE RELIABLE SOURCE THAN US" STORY BEFORE EC COMMISSION SPOKESMAN'S BRIEFING ON BASIS SIMONET APRIL 10 STATEMENT TO EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, PLUS USUAL MASSAGING BY LEMAITRE'S GAULLIST FRIENDS IN BRUSSELS. IN CONVERSATION WITH ME APRIL 12 LEMAITRE AGREED THAT HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN MORE ACCURATE IF HE HAD HAD BENEFIT OF EC COMMISSION SPOKESMAN'S BRIEFING. TYPICALLY, THOUGH, LEMAITRE WISHED TO DISMISS DISTINCTION BETWEEN "EMBARGO" AND "SUSPENSION OF LICENSING" AS "MERE JURIDICAL POINT OF LITTLE SUBSTANCE".

4. QUESTION I HAVE FOUND MOST DIFFICULT TO ANSWER IS "IS IT TRUE, AS SIMONET SAYS, THAT THERE WAS NO PRIOR CONSULTATION--AND WHY NOT, SINCE THIS WAS US COMPLAINT DURING YEAR OF EUROPE?"
HOFFMAN

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